

Christ Lutheran Church

The People of Christ Sharing the Love of Christ

January 2021



Dear Friends,

As we begin a new year on the calendar I also begin a new year here at Christ serving as your pastor. I was installed here at Christ Lutheran Church on January 16, 2000, which means that come the 16th of this month I will be starting my 22nd year here. Where has the time gone, right? It seems as only yesterday that I first arrived here in Austin with my young family, but then I look at the ages of my girls, and I look at the past directories and see how many of our loved ones here at Christ have been laid to rest or moved on to other places, and then the 21 years here seem more real.

It worries me sometimes when I look at our constantly dwindling numbers, due to a number of factors, and I wonder what the future holds for us here at Christ. But in those moments of faithless doubt and worry I am quick to remember the faithfulness of God, and that the future of Christ Lutheran Church does not rest in my hands, or yours either, but the future of our beloved congregation rests in God's hands. It is, after all, His Church and not our own.

So we press on, being faithful to our mission and faithful to our calling, to be the "light of the world," and God's "witnesses," and "to disciple" any and every one as we are able, always being prepared to point to Jesus as the hope and Savior of our lives. We cannot control the outcome of our witness nor the future of our congregation, but we can continue to be faithful in our calling, knowing that it is always God who brings the increase, and trusting that He is continuing to use us as He wills. With that in mind, may we all have a renewed sense of mission and ministry in 2021, and may we as a church be fervent in our discipleship work of connecting people to Jesus, that they may know, and grow in, His love. To God be the Glory.

Have a great month and year,
Pastor John

**PASTOR
JOHN STENNFELD**



**www.
christaustin.
org**

Altar Flowers

Please note that we are now again receiving flowers for the altar for our Sunday worship. If you have signed up for a particular date, please remember to send/turn in your payment for your flowers.

New Flower Chart

The flower chart for the 2021 calendar year is now posted in the narthex. Sign up early to get your preferred dates.

Portals of Prayer

The new Portals of Prayer for January – March, 2021, are now in the narthex. Please note that starting in April, we will have a reduced number of copies available, so at that time we will ask that folks only take one copy per person. Those friends who would like a yearly subscription to Portals of Prayer can order them by calling CPH at 1-800-325-3040.

WHAT'S INSIDE

2-3 Around the Church

4 Celebrations!

*Please view back page for
guidelines on returning to the
sanctuary for service.*

Stewardship Verse

The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.

Galatians 6:8





Letter from the President



Mission Statement

The mission of Christ Lutheran Church is to connect people to Jesus through:

- ✦ *Inspirational Worship*
- ✦ *Loving Service*
- ✦ *Caring Fellowship*
- ✦ *Relevant Education*

So that they may know, and grow in, his love.

Creative Communication and Community Connections



Please contact Jordan for more information ...Just a reminder that we often take photos, and at times, video, of ministry events to put up around Church on the screen on Sundays and to post to the web that publicizes the worship, service, fellowship, and education life of Christ Lutheran.

Happy New Year! To say the least 2020 was a trying time for all of us. Also, 2020 was a productive year at Christ Lutheran despite the pandemic. Thanks to Phil Etter, our head trustee, we were able to get a new roof and happy to announce that there are no more leaks. We were also able to replace the sound system in the sanctuary, greatly improving the sound of the service. Also, a special thanks to Jordan and any others involved in getting live streaming up and running and continue to keep it going to bring church to those that cannot get out. Looking back despite the current pandemic at Christ Lutheran we were able to continue to keep the word of God coming to us thanks to Pastor John, Jordan, Phyllis and all of our musicians. Again, thanks to all to their dedication to bring us the services through the year.

We don't know what 2021 holds for us, but it is our responsibility to continue to bring the word not only to our members, but also to the world. As a church, there is only one option for 2021, and that is to continue to move forward. As a church we will continue to offer livestreaming, with the goal in mind to improve the service as well as simply operations so that it takes less people to operate the live streaming. Also, remember, that live streaming is not meant to be a replacement for in person worship. Even with social distancing in place at church, we as children of God are meant to worship together in person, so for those that can, I would suggest that you consider worshipping in person. No matter what happens, the mission stays the same here at Christ. Connecting people to Jesus and love and know Jesus.

We held our voters' assembly of 2020 on December 6th. At that meeting, the 2021 budget and officers were approved. The budget for 2021 is \$374,682 which is down 1.41% from 2020 budget.

Please continue to keep Christ Lutheran Church in your prayers as well as Pastor John and Jordan as they continue to bring the word of God to us every Sunday. On a final note, even though the way we attend church might have changed, the financial needs have not. Please continue to contribute to the church so that we can continue to bring the word of God not only to the members of Christ Lutheran Church, but to those that might find our website or our YouTube channel.

I am confident that Christ Lutheran will continue connecting people to Jesus through inspirational worship, loving service and relevant education. Thanks to each of you for the continuing part you play.

David Schaare
President

Paul's Missionary Journeys -

The Men's Study Group continues our study on Paul's Missionary Journeys on Tuesday, January 5, 2021 at 7:30 pm via Zoom online. We're using "Bringing the Gospel to the Ends of the Earth: Paul's Missionary Journeys" from CPH's online video Bible study series and also "Which Way, Lord?" by Rob Fuquay as resources. Contact Tim Ristow or Jordan for details on how to get connected via Zoom.

Christ Lutheran Social Media

- ✦ Go to Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/Christ-Austin-78704-121095017909219/> especially to tune into Facebook Live streaming of our Worship services, and Pastor's Discipleship class
- ✦ Go to Twitter - <https://twitter.com/ChristATX78704> especially to read Bible verses that also get posted on Facebook during the week
- ✦ Go to www.christaustin.org - click on 'YouTube' for videos of Pastor John's sermons and hymns from the previous Sunday; and be encouraged by "Songs of Our Faith"



Christ Lutheran Church Eunice Guild

January 2021

St. Paul says in 2 Tim. 1:5, that Eunice, the mother of Timothy, was a woman of "sincere faith." She loved her Lord and Savior, and she lived her faith. It is our prayer that we may all be granted this same sincere faith. God be with you and bless you as you spend time in Meditation and in Cooking With Eunice.

This page is sponsored
by the Women of the
Eunice Guild.



Meditation —

"TUNNELS"

I sat down at my computer in mid-December 2019 to write a meditation for our church's January 2020 Newsletter, and began with a quote often attributed to Martin Luther: "Even if I knew that tomorrow the world would go to pieces, I would still plant my apple tree." I typed, "I'm getting too old to buy green bananas," and then added, "No one knows if they will live to see their bananas ripen - what the year, or tomorrow, or even the next blink of an eye will bring." A few lines before closing, I boldly proclaimed, "2020! BRING IT ON! I may plant an apple tree AND buy some green bananas." OOPS! Well, 2020 was quite a ride! And yes, I know that in many ways, that is sadly a tremendously flippant understatement. This morning, I heard a radio program host advertising a cruise planned for late 2021. He said, "There is a light at the end of the tunnel!" I'm sure he was using this Merriam-Webster definition: "a reason to believe that a bad situation will end soon," - rather than "a warning of an oncoming train!" A light at the end of a dark tunnel shows there is a way out. It's a sign of hope - but, it's not a sure thing. We still have to find our way to that light, and we don't know what dangers may lie along the dark path. Looking toward a light at the end of a tunnel without being able to see the path, is frightening. Each step along the way could be risky. Being told there was a light at the end of the year 2020 "tunnel," was hopeful at first, but that light dimmed quickly. And, now hearing that there is a light at the end of the tunnel somewhere in 2021, offers little comfort. But guess what! 2021! BRING IT ON! I'm ready, and I don't need an earthly light at the end of that tunnel just for iffy hope, nor an earthly light to see a dangerous path. I have a much more powerful light to show me the way through the "tunnels" of life - it's the Light of God's Word. He tells us in Psalm 119:105, "[My] Word is a lamp to [your] feet and a light for [your] path." God's Word is the Light that reveals the dangers in the darkness of my sinful tunnels and illuminates the path God wants me to take. And, as a Child of God, I know the brightest Light that promises the greatest Hope - the Light of the World, Christ my Savior. He lights my life with His grace and forgiveness and promises the sure Hope of Salvation. In my sinful nature, I'm often still afraid and unsure of my steps along life's path no matter what year it is. But in the faith given me, daily renewed, and strengthened by the Holy Spirit, I am equipped to walk according to God's Will through all of my tunnels. My path is lit and certain. Come what may, I know exactly where I'm headed. God's work of salvation in me will not, cannot ever be taken away. I am His forever. He loves me, cares for me, and is with me no matter what happens in all my years' worth of tunnels to come. He promised, and in His great LOVE, He is incapable of breaking His promises. Tunnels are never easy. My goodness, consider 2020. But honestly, as believers in Christ, reaching the end of a tunnel is not really that important. There most likely will just be another tunnel. What is important is how we go through the tunnel. We take our Savior's Guiding Hand and in faith boldly take each step. When we do, He fills us with His Light. Jesus said we "are the light of the world" (Mt. 5:14), and we are to "let [our] light shine before others" (vs 16). Prayerfully, may we joyfully step out into 2021 and beyond, brightly shining with His Love and Promise of Hope. And, with God's help, may we light the way for someone else! *In the Light of Christ!*

Duannah

Cooking With Eunice

Our Sister's Tater Soup Quick & Easy - Warm & Comforting

- 2 large baking potatoes
- 3 slices of bacon
- 1 Tbsp butter
- 1/4 cup each, diced onion & celery
- 1 1/2 Tbsp flour
- 1 can (14.5 oz) low sodium chicken broth
- 1 cube, chicken bullion
- 1/2 tsp each, garlic powder, onion powder, dried parsley flakes, & black pepper
- 1 large can (12 oz) evaporated milk
- 1 cup grated cheese (your favorite)

1. Microwave baking potatoes until done. Cool, peel & set aside.
2. In Dutch oven, fry bacon until crisp. Remove with slotted spoon. Set aside. Add butter to bacon grease in pot. Add onion & celery. Cook until soft. Stir in flour & cook about 3 minutes.
3. Stir in broth, bouillon cube, garlic powder, onion powder, parsley flakes & black pepper. Bring to boil. Lower heat to medium.
4. Stir in evaporated milk. Mash 1 of the potatoes & stir into soup. Cut the other potato into large dices & stir into soup.
5. Chop fried bacon & add about 1/4 of it to the pot. (Reserve remaining bacon.) Stir in grated cheese. Add more milk or broth to desired consistency, adjust seasonings to taste, & heat through.
6. Ladle into soup bowls. Top with additional grated cheese & reserved chopped bacon. Also good is fresh chopped parsley, chopped green onion, and chopped jalapeno.





January Birthdays

Name	Month/Day
Lauren Chapman	1/1
Samuel Chapman	1/1
Bill Martin	1/1
Tommie Craig	1/3
John Dunn	1/4
Phyllis Trautner	1/6
Phyllis Mitchell	1/8
Brody Richter	1/9
Chloe Calvo	1/13
Emily Richter	1/17
Donald Kirby	1/20
Conner Mitchell	1/24
Dorothy Richter	1/26
Geneva Mensing	1/29
Thomas Craig	1/30
Louise Alexander	1/31

January Anniversaries

- Felix & Louise Alexander**
01/06/1963
- Mitchell & Taylor Teeters**
01/25/2020
- John & Linda Mitchell**
01/27/2000

January Flower Chart Given by...

January 3

Michael & Cindy Zieschang

January 10

January 17

January 24

The Decker Family
in memory of Ruby Decker

Debbie Harrison
In honor of Taylor and Mitch's
First Anniversary

January 31

Kevin & Barbara Craig
In memory of Gail Craig's birthday
In Honor of January birthdays of
Tommie & Thomas

Guidelines for In-Person Worship at Christ

We ask all those who plan to attend the worship service or discipleship class to:

- ✦ Avoid all handshaking, hugging, or touching of any kind with those outside their family.
- ✦ Bring a mask and wear it at all times within our facilities (except when receiving the Lord's Supper).
- ✦ Maintain social distancing at all times while entering/exiting/attending our worship and/or discipleship class.
- ✦ Please do not touch/handle/use any of the hymnals for any purpose (hymns/liturgies will be printed in the bulletin).
- ✦ Please wash and/or sanitize your hands often while in attendance at Christ (i.e. entering the sanctuary, prior to Holy Communion, leaving the sanctuary).
- ✦ Please do not gather in the narthex, sanctuary, or hallways to talk before or after worship.
- ✦ Please wait for your row to be dismissed at the end of worship and proceed to exit the building (unless you are attending the discipleship study or using the restroom).
- ✦ Please do not attend worship if you have any signs of illness (i.e. elevated temperature, sore throat, coughing, body aches, etc).
- ✦ Err on the side of caution – be respectful of others' fears and precautions
- ✦ Come prepared to praise and thank God for bringing us back together, and continue to ask God to protect us as we once again gather for worship.

Sunday Morning Schedule (until further notice)

Worship at 9:30 am

(For in-person attendance & streamed via Facebook Live)

Pastor's Discipleship Class at 10:45 am

No disciple class on January 3

(For in-person attendance & streamed via Facebook Live)

Online Giving

A word of thanks to all of you for your continued support of our ministry here at Christ Lutheran Church, and a special note of thanks to all of you who have chosen to give online through our website with the Vanco portal. In a time of less volunteerism due to Covid-19 and such, the online giving is less cumbersome and more streamlined for our Financial Secretary to manage. That being said, we would ask those of you giving through this online way to consider giving through your bank accounts (savings or checking) as opposed to using a credit/debit card. We are charged a 2.75% transaction fee whenever a credit/debit card is used, and while that may not seem like a lot for a \$25 offering (\$0.69 fee), for a \$500 offering (\$13.75 fee) those fees become quite significant. Again, we are grateful for any and all offerings and gifts to Christ Lutheran, but in order to be the best stewards of what God has entrusted to us we do kindly ask all of you credit/debit card givers to consider using one of your bank accounts instead. Thank you.